

Message Text

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TOSEC 26

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: AORG, UN, GW

SUBJ.: UN ADMINISTRATION: PROPOSED TRANSLATION OF
GERMAN DOCUMENTS IN UN

REF: USUN 3168

1. FOLLOWING IS AN EXCERPT ON USE OF GERMAN LANGUAGE IN
THE UN FROM AN UNCLEARED MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION
BETWEEN THE DEPUTY SECRETARY AND FRG AMBASSADOR BERNDT
VON STADEN ON SEPT. 20. THE EXCERPT IS RELEVANT TO THE
SECRETARY'S LUNCHEON WITH FOREIGN MINISTER GENSCHER ON
SEPT. 24.

2. "AMBASSADOR VON STADEN THEN BROUGHT UP THE QUESTION OF
GERMAN IN THE UN. HE EXPLAINED THAT THE FRG, GDR AND
AUSTRIA HAD PROPOSED THE USE OF GERMAN IN A VERY MODEST
AND LIMITED WAY. THE THREE COUNTRIES WANT SOME DOCUMENTS
TRANSLATED INTO GERMAN AND MADE THEIR PROPOSAL IN ACCORD-
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ANCE WITH ARTICLE 57 OF THE PROCEDURAL CODE. HE

EMPHASIZED THAT THIS PROPOSAL IS NOT A FIRST STEP TOWARD
MAKING GERMAN A FULL WORKING LANGUAGE IN THE UN. HE
REFERRED TO THE USE OF ARABIC AND NOTED THAT THIS USE OF
GERMAN WOULD BE IN ACCORDANCE WITH PROCEDURES ALREADY
ADOPTED IN THE UN. HE ALSO NOTED THE LIMITED COST,
ESTIMATED AT \$500,000 A YEAR, AND THEN EMPHASIZED THE

POLITICAL IMPORTANCE TO THE FRG OF THIS RARE OPPORTUNITY
TO COOPERATE WITH THE GDR. WITH REFERENCE TO COST, THE
AMBASSADOR UNDERLINED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE UN PAYING A
SMALL PORTION SO THAT THE TRANSLATIONS WOULD BE OFFICIAL
UN DOCUMENTS. HE ADDED THAT THE THREE GERMAN-SPEAKING
COUNTRIES PAY APPROXIMATELY 9 PERCENT OF THE UN BUDGET,
WHICH IS A LARGER PERCENTAGE THAN ANY OTHER LANGUAGE
GROUP WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE CHARTER LANGUAGES. HE
CONCLUDED BY POINTING TO THE INCREASED USE OF GERMAN IN
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES SUCH AS CSCE, MBFR, AS WELL AS
REGULAR PROCEEDINGS OF THE EC.

"AMBASSADOR VON STADEN THEN REFERRED TO A RECENT POSITION TAKEN BY AMBASSADOR SCALI TO THE EFFECT THAT THE U.S. WOULD SUPPORT THE GERMAN PROPOSAL ONLY IF THE FRG, GDR AND AUSTRIA PAID THE FULL COST. HE ASKED IF THE U.S. COULD RE-EXAMINE ITS POSITION AND SUPPORT THE GERMAN PROPOSAL.

"THE DEPUTY SECRETARY REPLIED THAT WE WOULD BE GLAD TO TAKE THE AMBASSADOR'S REMARKS UNDER CONSIDERATION. HE EMPHASIZED THAT WE DO NOT OPPOSE THE GERMAN LANGUAGE. WE DO OPPOSE PROLIFERATION OF LANGUAGES IN THE UN. THE DEPUTY SECRETARY SAID THAT ONE POSSIBLE SOLUTION WOULD BE FOR THE SPONSORING COUNTRIES TO PAY THE FULL COST ON THE ASSURANCE THAT THE TRANSLATIONS WOULD BE OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS OF THE UN.

"AMBASSADOR VON STADEN SAID THAT HE THOUGHT THIS MATTER WOULD BE DISCUSSED BY SECRETARY KISSINGER AND FOREIGN MINISTER GENSCHER ON SEPT. 24." INGERSOLL

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